

Safeguarding children

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy has been updated to reflect the latest publications: [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015 \(KCSIE 2015\)](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015](#), [Gloucester Safeguarding Children Board \(GSCB\)](#)

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Recruiting Staff, Volunteers and Governors and managing visitors in our setting.

At Eastington Playgroup we practice safe recruitment in line with Government guidance by using **at least one accredited recruiter (Mandy Owen)** on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. We will ensure that any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures outlined in the GSCB.

- Candidates are required to complete 'enhanced disclosure' checks with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. (CAPITA – STAFF, OFSTED – VOLUNTEERS)
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children. (EYFS 1.3)6
- Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK will undergo the same checks as all other staff. In addition, Playgroup will make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.
- Volunteers and visitors do not work unsupervised. (EYFS 1.3)
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. See policy 1.11 cameras and photographs, 1.12 mobile phones and 1.13 ICT and communication. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Staff and committee members sign an annual declaration for on-going suitability to work with children and are aware that any incident that may affect their suitability to work with children is declared immediately.

Our responsibility to identify child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, Playgroup staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be *strong, resilient and listened to* and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Designated Safeguarding Lead, Training and Responsibilities

Playgroup is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015 \(KCSIE 2015\)](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015](#) and [Gloucester Safeguarding Children Board \(GSCB\)](#)

- We have a designated senior person for safeguarding (child protection) who has received appropriate training and support for this role and is part of the settings senior leadership team. ***Our Designated Safeguarding Person is Mandy Owen – Play Leader. In the absence of the Play Leader, The Deputy will be the acting Designated Safeguarding Person.***
- We have a nominated Committee member who is responsible for child protection who has received appropriate training. ***Chair – Josie Pajak***
- Every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role and have received a safeguarding induction **within their first 7 days of employment.**
- The DSL must undertake the GSCB multi agency training every 2 years
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the DSL. The DSL will ensure that all members of staff complete Child protection training every 3 years and mandatory FGM and Prevent training.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school/setting and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the Playgroup prospectus.
- The DSL will notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a Child protection Plan (previously known as being on the child protection register.)
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer including supply or agency workers, contractors or governors.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Ensure that all staff have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Will support children in accordance with their care plan.
- The GSCB Child Protection Procedures are only available online and updated regularly. The DSL will take responsibility to view this link regularly to see if there has been an update. The DSL will subscribe to the GSCB alerts <http://www.gscb.org.uk/alerts> .
- We will review our safeguarding policy yearly.

Responding to suspicions of abuse and Resolving Professional differences.

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect. Any member of staff who by virtue of a child's behaviour or appearance becomes suspicious of abuse, or is told that abuse has taken place, will immediately inform the designated person within the setting. **All staff are aware that any member of staff can make a referral.**

When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play. If a child begins to talk about an abusive incident, s/he should be allowed to speak, and be listened to carefully. Time should be taken to gain an understanding of what the child is trying to say. **No promise of confidentiality will be made.**

- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or maybe victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young

children in our care we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.

- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- ***Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures outlined in the KCSIE 2015 and GSCB detailed below.***
- Where such evidence is apparent, The DSL will be informed immediately and a detailed written account of the concern / disclosure will be made.
- The DSL will refer concerns to the [**The Front Door Tel: 01452 426 565**](tel:01452426565) formally known at the Children's help Desk and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.
- Where the DSL feels that the social care team did not address their concerns for the child they will use the '**Resolution of professional difficulties**' (**escalation policy**) as advised by the GCSB. The DSL will gain advice about procedural issues by contacting the safeguarding childrens service [**01452 58 3626**](tel:01452583626) .For out of hours social work advice the DSL will contact the [**Emergency Duty Team on 01452 614 194**](tel:01452614194)

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
 - the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate incident file securely and confidentially. They are shared with the DSL and reported following the GSCB guidelines.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- The GSCB contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral. **A copy of the guidance procedures for referrals are kept on display on the wall inside the playgroup roller cabinet which gives detailed guidelines to follow.**
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

Allegations against staff and Whistle blowing procedures

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the GSCB when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. The DSL will immediately contact **the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) on 01452 426994** for an Initial Discussion. It is not the responsibility of the DSL to oversee the Allegations Management process.

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- If necessary, the DSL together with the Local Authority Designated Officer, Social Worker representatives of the Safeguarding Children Service, HR and Police will then convene a multi-agency Allegations Management Meeting urgently to plan any further appropriate action. The setting should not carry out an investigation until this meeting has taken place in case the allegation meets the criminal threshold.
- If a member of staff receiving a complaint against the Senior Play Leader who is the designated person, they will report it immediately to the Committee chair who will in turn immediately contact the [Local Authority Designated officer for Allegations \(LADO\) on 01452 426994](#).
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.
- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the GSCB.
- Staff and volunteers are asked to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the safeguarding regime to the DSL.
- Where a staff member feels unable to raise the issue with the DSL or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed other whistleblowing channels are open to them. They are advised to contact the Committee Chair immediately. If they are not satisfied with the Chair's actions they may contact the Head of the local Primary School.

Keeping records of allegations and Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.
- Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned.. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference,

where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Prevention Duty

- Eastington Playgroup actively seeks to keep children safe by applying the principles of the Prevent Duty (Counter-terrorism act 2015) through a balanced and engaging, age appropriate curriculum, which teaches tolerance, respect and understanding in accordance with fundamental British Values.
- As applicable, additional guidance will be sought from GSCB when a child's welfare is of concern.

Caring for a child that has been abused

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Playgroup

may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Playgroup will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- Playgroup's ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- Playgroup's behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school.
- Playgroup will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- The DSL will contact the child's social worker before taking action to exclude.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil who has a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
- If Playgroup is unclear where a pupil is moving, the DSL will follow the Children Missing in Education guidance and liaise with the Education Entitlement and Inclusion team.

Lock down procedures

- Staff are aware of lock down procedures in case playgroup comes under threat and will endeavour to immediately move the children to a place of safety furthest away from the threat within the building taking the mobile phone with them and calling the police for assistance. As in a fire evacuation procedure, the register/rucksack will be taken along with the phone to the safe place.

Other child protection records

- Child attendance records – we keep a record of any child absent without notification. We ask parents to phone or text us by 10am on the morning that a child will not attend whatever the reason. We will endeavour to make contact ourselves if this is not done so to support child protection procedures.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Keeping Children safe in Education (2015)

- Working together to Safeguard children (2015)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2010)
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority: www.isa-gov.org.uk
- GSCB.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	_____	name of setting
Held on	_____	(date)
Date to be reviewed	_____	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	_____	
Name of signatory	_____	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	_____	

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Safeguarding Children (2010)